DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 114 137 JC 750 569

AUTHOR Roueche, John E.; Mink, Oscar G.
TITLE Toward Personhood Development in the Community College.
PUB DATE [Apr 75]
NOTE 20p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (Seattle, Washington, April 13-16, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; Counseling; Dropout Rate; Educational Innovation; Educationally Disadvantaged; *Individualized Instruction; Individual Power; *Junior Colleges; *Locus of Control; Low Achievement Factors; *Low Achievers; Personality Change; *Remedial Programs; School Holding Power; Success Factors
IDENTIFIERS Nontraditional Students

ABSTRACT

National studies indicate that remedial or developmental programs in the community college have generally been unsuccessful, resulting in inordinately high attrition rates among nontraditional, low-achieving students. A more appropriate system is individual, learner-oriented instruction. The attempt is to shift the students' orientation from external (chance or other powerful individuals determine events) to internal (there is a direct relationship between an individual's behavior and its outcome). The keys to the success of individualized instruction are: (1) systematic design of the total learning environment, (2) provision for multiple levels of entry into carefully ordered instructional sequences, (3) staff involvement personally and professionally, and (4) openness to approaching specific problems (grades, dropouts) on a generalized, fundamental level (locus of control). A study is being made involving a sample of 1,200 students attending several community colleges. The basic research design examines the main effects of (1) instruction, either self-paced or traditional, and (2) counseling, either composite or traditional. Data for the first two years of the project indicate that individualized instruction does produce a shift toward internal locus of control in students, if a period of at least one semester is involved. (NHM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED114137

TOWARD PERSONHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

by

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

John E. Roueche
Professor and Director
Community College Leadership Program
The University of Texas at Austin

Oscar G. Mink
Visiting Professor
Community College Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Community college teachers are joining many other educators in their concern over how to "motivate" their students. Through open admissions policies and vigorous recruitment, community colleges are enrolling more and more "nontraditional" students; that is, students from low-income, minority backgrounds who have experienced little satisfaction and success in their previous educational endeavors. Many of them turn to community colleges because of the wide variety of occupational programs offered. However, according to many teachers, these students seem to not be motivated, incapable of work and unwilling to try. It seems apparent, though, that if a student is enrolled at all he must have some sort of motivation and desire to work. Still, the drop-out rate for these students is alarmingly high. Perhaps we need to approach the education of the nontraditional student from an entirely different perspective than has previously been devised.

JC 750 569

Most students, particularly ones enrolled in vocational programs, value work as much as anyone. Indeed, the value of work, stemming from the Puritan Ethic, has always contributed significant weight to America's ideology. The dignity of work and success at one's work are valued by our society as highly as individual freedom itself. Indeed, the freedom to choose what one wishes to be is often interpreted in terms of work. "I want to be a nurse, mechanic, dentist, teacher, farmer, etc."

While work adjustment success continues to be a predominant social goal, our country continues to harbor a significant population of psychologically and socially deprived or disadvantaged persons. The growing complexity of society with its concomitant impersonalization, unstable family life, sex and racial discrimination, economic uncertainty, poverty and other, more modern, stresses are certainly partly responsible. Many such "socially handicapped" persons are characterized by feelings of powerlessness, worthlessness, alienation. They often exhibit inappropriate adaptive behavior such as delinquency, hostility, unrealistic levels of aspiration, and are further disadvantaged by a lack of complex verbal skills and insufficient occupational abilities, both necessary tools for coping with our technological society.

National attrition rates for nontraditional students in community colleges are alarming, although no standards for examining attrition exist. Many institutions have attempted to better serve the nontraditional, low-achieving student through the initiation of remedial or developmental programs. National studies, however, indicate that such programs have

generally been unsuccessful (Roueche, 1968; Roueche and Kirk, 1973). Some developmental studies programs have maintained high retention rates while students were in the programs, but then experienced accelerated attrition once the students returned to traditional classrooms. It may be assumed that these students had not learned to cope with the mechanics of traditional classroom instruction. That is, nontraditional students were unprepared to adjust to an environment where (1) students are expected to possess the necessary verbal skills to accommodate lecture-textbook approaches, (2) students are expected to learn at the same rate, (3) students are expected to be equally interested in the prescribed course content, and (4) students are expected to be self-motivated. Consequently, the nontraditional low-achieving student's concept of himself as a failure is reinforced. He faces an increasingly complex society with virtually no educational training, few saleable skills, and one more failure experience on his record.

Many educators would note that such students come to the community college poorly prepared, have no motivation and do not even seem to want to succeed. Teachers feel if a student would only "try", that is, invest some time and energy in the pursuit of academic objectives, he could "succeed" and pass the course.

However, the ability to master one's environment appears to be more closely related to a person's expectation regarding his ability to succeed than it is to "motivation" as the word is commonly used. It is important to understand that no one can "try" unless he <u>believes</u> he has some chance

of success. Individuals act according to the extent to which they believe their efforts will derive success (or payoffs) from the environment. Motivation, the basis of action, becomes then a function of one's belief in one's ability to succeed at obtaining a desired goal. In other words, the difference between success and failure, in work or any other field, is primarily dependent upon the way a person thinks. Whether or not a person is able to control his own life and direct his own success is certainly not a new concept. Rotter, however, has placed this concept within the context of his social learning theory and highlights its relevance to members of the helping profession. He calls it control expectancy (Rotter, 1966) People who believe they can control payoffs are said to have an "internal locus of control." They perceive location of control to be at least partly within themselves. Those who perceive that chance or powerful others largely determine their destinies are said to have an "external locus of control."

Externally oriented persons who do not perceive the contingency between their behavior and its outcome feel powerless to change the direction of their lives, and thus are unlikely to "try". That they do not try does not necessarily mean they do not want to do better. Since he perceives no direct relationship, an external generally will not accept responsibility for his actions, such as making a failing grade because he did not properly prepare. "The teacher gave me an F" might be a typical statement. An internal, on the other hand, definitely sees the contingency between his behavior (studying) and its outcome (grade). "I failed the last test, so I'll have to study much harder to make a B next time."

Locus of control refers to the disposition to perceive one's reinforcements as consequences of one's own behavior or as due to outside factors. This variable is concerned with the degree to which an individual accepts personal responsibility for what happens to him. It seems likely that the differences in the degree to which individuals attribute reinforcement to their own actions might depend upon their history of reinforcements. People would tend to develop an external orientation because of frequent arbitrary payoffs, seemingly uncontrollable forces keeping them from success (such as racial discrimination) and various other countless failure experiences. It follows logically, then, that an alteration in the history of reinforcement (as is present in the behavioral change process, delineated later in the essay) should result in a parallel change in locus of control perception. People can change, and often do.

Research findings indicate that Internals are more open to correcting their problems in remedial programs, to acquiring more knowledge about their problems, and so on. Internals try harder to get out of their ruts. This suggests that current efforts to motivate students are taking the wrong approach. For one thing, no teacher can motivate a student. A student must develop the motivation himself. Energies spent in developing stronger internal locus of control would be far more productive than trying to motivate a student to make a better grade in economics. Efforts at more basic levels would be more effective in "helping students to help themselves."

Furthermore, Internality is related to more than motivation and a willingness to try in a school setting. The research on internality is over-

whelming. Internal persons, in contrast to externals, demonstrate improved job efficiency, as well as more highly developed personal qualities relating to employability and job success. In addition, internals manifest higher need for achievement, responsibility and resultant satisfaction with training programs they may happen to be in. Consequently, positive work attitudes and behavior appear to be more highly associated with an internal locus of control. This indicates that Internals are more capable of attaining work adjustment success than Externals, regardless of desires or needs.

The overwhelming majority of studies report a positive association between internality and achievement behavior and do so despite a wide range of measuring devices for the locus of control variable. This was dramatically demonstrated in the U. S. Office of Education report on equality of educational opportunity (often called The Coleman Report). (Coleman, 1966). Locus of control was there found to be a better predictor of school achievement among children of minority groups than were any of the many other attitude, family, school and teacher variables studied. All the evidence points in the same direction, and carries the same message; viz., the learning process can be significantly improved if students control orientations can be shifted toward the internal direction.

Recent studies report that Internals spend more time in intellectual activities, exhibit more interest in academic pursuits, and score higher on intelligence tests than do Externals. Several studies indicate that Internals are better adjusted and have a better sense of well-being than

Externals. One study showed Internals to have greater ability to work with others, are more cooperative, self-reliant and courteous (Tseng 1970). Externals, on the other hand, are more likely to be malajusted and less likely to cope effectively with their problems. MacDonald and Games (1971) report that Externals are more likely than Internals to endorse values associated with widespread neurosis. Externals are more prone to engage in escapist activities, are more hostile, are less trusting, and are less trustworthy. The literature indicates that shifts from External to Internal control orientations can lead to desirable personality changes. Therefore, a change in the locus of control orientations of individuals not only results in higher motivation, but a much greater likelihood that the student perceives he can, and is willing to, succeed.

If community colleges are concerned with keeping students in school, directing efforts at fundamental levels will result in the immediate objective of program completion by greater numbers of nontraditional students. Such direction also tends to develop positive personality aspects leading to achievement of broader goals for both students and society especially the fully functioning, self-actualizing individual. Students who develop Internal locus of control will learn they can succeed, and will continue their success orientation outside of the classroom. Gaining their chosen goals leads to greater self-fulfillment which in turn reduces the amount of tension they feel between themselves and their environment. A person with an internal control orientation will not feel so pressured by society but will be capable of choosing a direction best suited for him and succeeding

with it. If "E" to "I" shifts and related changes in the apparent correlates of occupational preparation, mental health, academic performance and work adjustment can be created by means of improved pedagogy, the implications for improved attitudes and motivation levels are far-reaching. The community colleges, by supporting the development of E to I shifts, will then truly be serving the community in the broadest sense, by helping students overcome their social handicaps. The main challenge becomes not how to motivate students, but how to facilitate External to Internal control orientations shifts.

Under the auspices of a three-year longitudinal grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, we are conducting an experiment with ten participating community colleges in the South and Southwest to test the extent to which students exhibiting high externality can be made more internal. The primary objectives of the study are (1) to identify which kinds of experience, instruction, or counseling, or some combination thereof would have the greatest impact on E to I shifts and (2) to ascertain the long-range impact on E to I shifts on variables which are associated with locus of control and academic/vocational success. We are endeavoring to ascertain if learner-controlled, self-paced, self-directed learning experiences produce more significant E to I shifts on control expectancy and concurrent changes in the potential mental health correlates of rigidity, anxiety, rationality, self-concept and achievement than does traditional instruction. Further, counseling strategies specially oriented towards producing E to I shifts are being compared in effectiveness to traditional practices on these same

variables. Preliminary results of two of our pilot studies are most promising. A brief synopsis of various counseling techniques and of instructional strategies will clarify methods being used. Reimanis and Schaefer (1970) emphasize a technique for making the subject see himself as having some power to affect change. Dua (1970) theorizes that attitudes of Externals are realistically rooted in past experiences. They do not expect to succeed because they have not in the past, due to the fact they have not learned efficient methods of producing change. Dua believes behavior change programs are more effective than reeducation to change attitudes. Masters (1970) attempts to alter clients perceptions about a particular situation without changing the behavior per se. His technique implies that people prefer to function within internal control situations. MacDonald (1972) suggests that, though the various techniques each appear valid, it would be most prudent to exploit the benefits of all. He suggests that all of the features of the various techniques (which are compatible) be combined to produce a "syncretic" or molar strategy. Following this notion, our present study includes a composite IE counseling strategy.

We feel that counseling techniques should be integrated into the classroom. Our theory is that individualized instructional techniques will increase the probability of E to I shifts. Teachers and counselors working together is the most powerful formula. Every staff energy is devoted to strategies designed to enhance student success in terms of what the student values for herself.

We have theorized that the most appropriate system for helping students

who enter the community college with an array of deficiencies developed through years of failure, and who don't try because they don't believe they can, is an individual, learner-oriented instructional system. Empirical evidence received to date indicates that students in our participating project are staying in school with high retention rates, good achievement, and most importantly, new perceptions that they can succeed in college and that they are OK as human beings. The keys to success are: (1) systematic design of the total learning environment (2) provision for multiple levels of entry into carefully ordered instructional sequences (3) staff involvement personally and professionally and (4) an openness to approaching specific problems (grades, dropouts) on generalized, fundamental levels (locus of control).

Individualized instruction means that learning is geared to the present capabilities of each student. Students come to community colleges with a variety of abilities, knowledge levels and perceptions. If they expect to fail, it is because they have failed in the past. The only experience which will create an expectancy to succeed is actual success. Individual instruction is designed to permit each student to achieve success one step at a time beyond his present level of cognitive and skill development. At first the steps should be well within the reach of the student so that success is guaranteed. The basic strategy being advocated is a systematic design of several skill development sequences arranged in graduated learning steps from the simple to the complex (e. g. be able to write a grammatical phrase, sentence, then paragraph).

Furthermore, students should know exactly what is expected of them.

Arbitrary payoffs lead to development of external orientations. If students receive a detailed description of steps necessary for program (or unit) completion, they will, perhaps for the first time, know they must take action to complete the program, and very importantly, they will know which specific actions are necessary. Consequently, the relationship between behavior and payoff will be made clear. Basically then, each educational strategy takes advantage of 4 propositions: (1) the student's ability to act; (2) the psychological-social learning situation; (3) a payoff; (4) the student's evaluation of the payoff.

Individualized instruction should also take cognizance of the mastery learning concept and the preceding four fundamental requirements of Rotter's social learning model. Means for determining performance standards (criteria) must be made clearly and objectively. The student may then be involved in self-assessment and evaluation, a further boost to establishing Internality. Each student should be evaluated against performance criteria and student performances should never be compared. Good behavioral sequencing in the instructional design should enable each client to move from the level of skills possessed at the time of program entry to the established performance standards. Criterion performance, not time, is tne determining consideration.

Our study involves a sample of 1200 students attending participating community colleges. The basic research design examines the main effects of (1) instruction, either self-paced or traditional and (2) counseling, either composite or traditional. Half of the schools in the study have converted

50 percent of their courses to self-paced instruction, while the rest are using more traditional approaches. Half of the schools have counselors specifically trained in methods shown to be effective for causing E to I shifts, while the rest are using traditional counseling methods. We are beginning the third year of the study and are already in receipt of rather substantive data from those students who began in community colleges last year.

According to the hypothesis we tested, significant gain scores (representing significant shifts toward internalization) were observed more often in students receiving individualized instruction than those receiving traditional instruction. These results, while not entirely definitive, are indeed positive. Students enrolled in individualized courses scored more homogeneously on control expectancy scales than students enrolled in more traditional courses. Also, the average increase in internality was in excess of three skill points, indicating overall movement in the direction of internal control orientation. It appears to us that individualized instruction does produce a shift toward internal locus of control in students, if at least a period of one semester is involved.

It is important to emphasize here that the form of instruction (methodology and the like) may not be as important as the students' perceptions of the teacher's behavior and their perception that the teacher is endeavoring to help students succeed. A teacher who is willing to develop materials, specify objectives, accommodate individual differences is simply showing his students that he is willing to make learning possible. More than this,

he is indicating that he "cares" about his students to the extent that he is willing to go extra miles in an effort to help them succeed.

Our project also involves the development of counseling skills in counselors and problem-solving skills in students participating in the project. We are emphasizing Mink's variations of Behavior Change Process (1970). The steps are as follows:

Step One	Identify the behavior that you wish to eliminate and identify the new behavior that you wish to strengthen; hold a conference with the student.
Step Two	Obtain suggestions from the student about ways to change his behavior; explain your own objections to his behavior; offer your own suggestions; consult with guidance services.
Step Three	Identify the possible reinforcers for the undesirable behavior and determine who or what is providing the reinforcement for the undesirable behavior.
Step Four	Decide upon a reinforcer that you think will strengthen the new behavior, and withhold the reinforcer for the undesirable behavior (extinction) or suppress the old behavior.
Step Five	Shape the new behavior.
Step Six	Maintain the new behavior by using positive reinforcement, moving from a continuous reinforcement schedule to an occasional reinforcement schedule.
Step Seven	Reshape the new behavior (if the old behavior recurs) and/or reexamine your past actions in the behavior change process.

Those of you familiar with Glasser's notion of reality therapy (1965) will see the similarity between Mink's Behavior Change Process and the basic steps in reality therapy. The synthesis we have developed we call "composite

counseling." In other words, our project is endeavoring to teach teachers the basic skills of student motivation and the fostering of positive attitudes. The composite counseling strategy draws upon a series of studies done on college students. These studies depict different processes for developing internal control orientations in students. The change in emphasis from the Behavior Change Process is the additional emphasis upon the student's seeing the relationship(s) between his behavior and subsequent consequences and making personal value judgments regarding what he (the student) wants for himself. Basically, in all of our efforts, we attempt to help the student focus upon his personal power and capacity to successfully manage his own learning environment for the betterment of his educational progress and attainment of his career goals. Ultimately the student accepts responsibility for what she achieves and what she does for herself. In a success-oriented learning environment this process becomes a powerful antidote to the poison of a failure identity and/or low self-concept.

All of the above must occur in the context of what Glasser calls involvement and/or more simply, making friends. We advocate friendships between students and instructors; students and counselors; students and educational leaders; students and students; students and other community persons. The secret of the process, if there is a secret, is that people pair in what we can only term friendships. Through these pairings work occurs; and through work, success identities emerge. The essential climatic or social-institutional variables become: (1) love; (2) measured doses of success; and (3) enjoyment of life. We believe in conditional positive payoffs for work accomplished and unconditional payoffs (friendship and love) simply

because one is a human being and one is alive.

Good evaluative data on innovative instructional and counseling programs as they relate to mental health and low income students are rare. The study has not been conducted elsewhere and the questions being raised are only hypothetically answered in the literature. Support of the basic hypothesis could revolutionize counseling in junior and community colleges and advance instructional methodology beyond current 19th century strategies. The importance of the study to community college systems of the United States cannot be overemphasized.

Follow-up studies on school dropouts and delinquents who have been involved in more traditional educational programs are not encouraging. All of the research points in the same direction -- people are handicapped by external locus of control orientations. The prevailing belief is that it is desirable to change people, especially those who are not doing well in our society, in the direction of internality. The literature indicates that shifts from external to internal control orientations could lead to a variety of desirable personality changes. Concentration on the control dimension in the present study is deemed appropriate because of connections established between IE and achievement behavior and IE and mental health.

Finally, although the evidence is still scanty, it appears that the self-pacing experience may affect behavior in other areas (Sheppard and and McDermot, 1970; Ferster, 1968). We would begin to be able to say that a set of practices established in one course produced effects which generalize beyond the substantive confines of the course, and help to

develop "conceptual" skills of broad utility to students. This aim of most educational attempts -- widely hoped for, often claimed, rarely clearly achieved -- would become the subject of a specific technology whose effectiveness would evolve through repeated cycles of evaluation and modification. The self-pacing system, once operational and running fairly smoothly in any course, provides just such a vehicle for the development of the required learning.

The reason we are concerned with dropout rate is it is an indication that students are not getting what they want from community colleges. Certainly in an era which emphasized development of human resources, community colleges will try to do their part to stimulate the growth of their students to become productive, fulfilled and socially responsible citizens.

It is hoped that the innovative programs briefly described here will have greater success in achieving this goal than their traditional predecessors. The concept of community college,after all, as a structure to serve the community, is innovative in itself. By concentrated efforts at a most fundamental level of human experience (locus of control) more positive influence will be felt in all areas. Generalized personality development leads to positive performance in many specific areas. The concept of individual freedom is dependent on whether or not an individual deems he does indeed have freedom to act and choose as he wishes. Only a person who believes individual freedom to exist will value and exercise that freedom. The ability for a person to choose his work and the capability to succeed at it lends support to the central concept of American ideology. The

dignity of work is possible only to persons who have fully chosen their work and who feel they more than society are responsible for the success and satisfaction they derive from it. To develop the personhood of each student entering the community college is of primary importance. Subsequent development of other abilities, knowledge, and goals will naturally follow. By helping develop individuals within society, community colleges will be making a substantial contribution to the development of society as a whole.

Bibliography

Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E. Q., Hobson, C. J., McPartland, J., Mood, A. M., Weinfeld, F. D., & York, R. L. Equality of educational opportunity. (Superintendent of Documents, Catalog No. FS 5.238:38001. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1966.

Dua, P. S. Comparison of the effects of behaviorally oriented action and psychotherapy reeducation on introversion-extraversion, emotionality, and internal-external control. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1970, 17, 567-572.

Ferster, C. B. Individualized instruction in an introductory psychology course. Psychological Record, 1968, 18, 1970.

Glasser, William. Reality Therapy. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

MacDonald, A. P., Jr. Internal-external locus of control change-techniques. Unpublished paper. Rehabilitation Literature, 1972, in press.

MacDonald, A. P., Jr., & Games, R. G. Ellis' irrational values: A validation study. Unpublished paper, West Virginia University, 1971.

Masters, John C. "Treatment of 'Adolescent Rebellion' by the Reconstrual of Stimuli." Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1970, 35, 2, 213-216.

Mink, Oscar G. The Behavior Change Process. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

Reimanis, G., & Schaeffer, M. Effects of counseling and achievement motivation training on locus of reinforcement control. Paper presented at annual EPA convention, Atlantic City, April 1970.

Rotter, J. B. Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. Psychological Monographs, 1966, 80, (1 Whole No. 609).

Roueche, John E. Salvage, Redirection, or Custody? Washington: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1968.

Roueche, John E. A Modest Proposal: Students Can Learn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1972.

Roueche, John E. and R. Wade Kirk. Catching Up: Remedial Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1973

Sheppard, W. C. and H. G. McDermot. Design and evaluation of a programmed course in introductory psychology. Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 1970, 3, 5-11.

Tseng, Michael S. "Locus of Control as a Determinant of Job Proficiency, Employability, and Training Satisfaction of Vocational Rehabilitation Clients." Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1970, Vol. 17, pp. 487-491.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

DEC 5 1975

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES

END

DEPT. OF HEW

NAT'L INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

ERIC

DATE FILMED

FEB 26 76